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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics

U. S. Department of Agriculture
and State Agricultural Colleges
Cooperating

Extension Service, Division
of Cooperative Extension,
Washington, D. C.

REPORT OF EXTENSION FORESTERS' SECTION *

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

COOPERATION WITH FEDERAL BUREAUS

1. How the Forest Service can cooperate with the extension forester in promoting farm forestry.

A. G. Hamel, representing the Forest Service at Milwaukee, stated that Region 9 has a branch of State and private forestry which is attempting to coordinate forestry activities on State and privately owned forest lands. This branch of the Forest Service cooperates with State foresters and with extension foresters. The regional office of the Forest Service is endeavoring to assist extension foresters by making trees available for planting under the agricultural conservation program, maintaining close contact with State legislators with reference to forestry legislation, encouraging the 5-acre demonstration plots in farm woodlands with emergency conservation work, carrying on farm-woodland investigations with particular reference to industrial consumption as in Dubois County, Ind., administering Clarke-McNary funds for State nurseries, and indirectly by encouraging those lines of research of the Federal forest experiment stations which will be of greatest usefulness to State farm-forestry programs.

E. W. Tinker, Chief of the Divisions of State and Private Forestry, United States Forest Service at Washington, said that the Norris-Doxey bill, if passed by Congress, would supplement the State farm-forestry programs and would help to put them on a more adequate basis.

The Norris-Doxey Bill is reported to have been endorsed by the National Nurserymen's Association, State foresters, and Land-Grant College Association. This bill recognizes that extension foresters are in need of more assistance, and provides money for the States to increase their extension forestry staffs independent of an equal amount by the State as under the present Clarke-McNary Law. Assurance was given to extension directors and extension foresters by Mr. Tinker and Mr. W. K. Williams that all money which may be made available to the States for extension foresters under this proposed bill will be administered entirely by State extension services.

2. The Soil Conservation Service policies and programs in relation to Central States extension foresters.

Mr. Stanley Locke, representing the regional forester for the Soil Conservation Service at Des Moines, stated trees are being used by the Soil

*Meetings held in connection with the Central States Regional Extension Conference at Ames, Iowa, March 25-27, 1937.

Conservation Service primarily as a factor in erosion control and not for economic purposes. The Soil Conservation Service recognizes the need for more research bearing on timber-stand improvement, farm-woodland grazing, silviculture, etc. The Service has recently been authorized to employ State conservation specialists, paid by the Soil Conservation Service but functioning under the direct supervision of the State extension service. These men are in a position to assist the extension foresters in promotional and educational work. The Soil Conservation Service is requiring larger contributions from farmers in forest planting as well as in other soil erosion-control practices, and this change in policy points to a more permanent type of farm-woodland improvement and protection.

3. Possibility of short courses for coordinating work of State and Federal forestry workers.

Many governmental agencies are now engaged in a wide variety of forestry practices which has given rise to a need for more frequent meetings between the personnel of these different governmental agencies, including the State, so that the personnel may be informed of current activities having a bearing on their work. To meet this need for more frequent personal contact between State and Federal employees in bureaus of services dealing with forestry, the University of Missouri has arranged a short course, or, properly, a symposium for workers. Members of the staff of the Central States Experiment Station and the administrative field force of the United States Forest Service have met regularly with State workers at the State university, and from these frequent meetings it is felt a better understanding of the objective of all agencies has been gained.

4. How farm forestry can be promoted through cooperation between State and Federal agencies.

Heavy agricultural losses from droughts and dust storms on one hand and from floods on the other point to the need for more cooperative work between State and Federal agencies. The Extension Service is first in line in education, promotion, and direction. Technical aid is the principal contribution of Federal agencies. Technical advice and supervision given to cooperating farmers are, in some places, the principal need of the extension foresters in their educational work. This supervision and advice should be extended to such farmers as are undertaking work on their own initiative but whose work cannot be followed closely by extension foresters themselves. Nursery-stock production for States without State nurseries is an essential aid. Basic research will give the extension foresters, in many cases, essential information needed to direct more successful forestry practices, especially in the Plains States.

COORDINATION OF FORESTRY EXTENSION
WITH OTHER AGRICULTURAL SUBJECTS

1. How farm forestry is integrated in the agricultural program in Ohio.

Forestry has long been accepted in Ohio as a farm crop. As a result, there are, in the dense agricultural region of the State, the best farm woodlands. Many farm practices being recommended today by other agricultural specialists are predicated upon the construction of buildings, which, in turn, is going to increase the demand for farm-forest products. This is particularly true of recommendations being made by the agricultural engineering department; and this department, by cooperating with the extension forester, has incorporated into recommended plans, specifications for forest products that can easily be obtained on many farms. The farm woodland in Ohio is looked upon not as a separate institution, or just another patch on the farm quilt, but as an integral part of the entire farm layout dovetailed and interwoven to make a complete farm unit.

2. Methods used in coordinating forestry in county agricultural programs.

Agricultural economists have reported that over many years there has been no real net increase in farm-crop production and income. This is due to the fact that gains from improved plant breeding and improved agricultural practices have been offset by reduced soil productivity. This knowledge prompted the drafting of a plan in Illinois designed to promote farm-use practices on a demonstration basis, the primary objective of which was to offset this soil loss. Forestry was incorporated into this State plan as having a very important function in reducing soil losses. Schools for demonstration leaders, including farmers, were the immediate outgrowth of this plan. A farm inventory of physical resources preceded any discussion of farm-management practices which conserve water and soil fertility and promote soil conservation. The correlation of farm practices recommended for farms included forestry as an effective soil-saving function. Individual farmers prepared their own farm-management maps and submitted them to the leaders and county agents for criticism and advice. As individual farms put under these directed management plans advanced their practices, county agents and local leaders held demonstration meetings on these farms, and, where forestry has been important in the plan, the extension forester has an unusually good opportunity to participate.

3. The place of wildlife in the farm-forestry program.

The present tendency in many wildlife discussions to indict the effectiveness of present knowledge of biological development is indicative of a real interest, contrasted with propaganda, in wildlife. Human welfare is visualized as the basic motive behind much of the movement to preserve and protect game and forest. Wildlife development involves the use of land and, therefore, rubs elbows with many other forms of land use. Success in wildlife promotion will depend on sound integration of land-use planning and management. Wildlife is a land resource facing increased demands on its productiveness but with little prospect of the demands being met, hence

there is no need to worry about surplus production of wildlife. It is also a resource containing both economic and esthetic values. A new appreciation of economic values is in prospect. This is not alone economics in terms of hunting fees to farms, but in actual production of fur and flesh on farms for direct sale. Whether principal emphasis in the future will be placed on the indirect economic value, the direct economic value, or the esthetic value in wildlife protection and development will depend on the integration of these factors with other forms of farm-land use.

INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXTENSION FORESTRY PROGRAM

1. How to interest county agents in placing forestry in their extension work program.

To prepare information for county agents in a way that will enable them readily to understand and appreciate its importance is one of the most important requirements in getting forestry incorporated into a county agent's work program. County agents are showing a more receptive approach to forestry, largely because of questions being submitted to them on trees and forests. These questions have, very likely, been prompted because of losses through drought and wind storms and the general feeling that trees are a factor in the control of losses caused by these agencies.

County agents will become more interested in forestry if they are given an opportunity to accompany the extension forester in visits to farms where tree planting is a topic of real interest to the farmer visited. The extension editor can be an important factor in interpreting forestry educational material for the press and for general distribution, including that for use over the radio. Integration of forestry with other agricultural projects that are made a part of the county agent's farm-management work offers an opportunity to include forestry in the work project. District-agent conferences offer a good opportunity for emphasizing forestry as a part of the county agent program.

2. Problems in teaching farm forestry to woodland owners.

In several prairie States it has been found that interest in tree growing seems to be in inverse ratio to the difficulty of getting trees established. In States with substantial areas of timber the marketing approach appears to be the most important one in interesting farmers in woodland protection and development. This has given rise to the need for more current information on outlets for forest products and on current market prices. This in turn means that the extension forester may need to do a limited amount of survey work at the same time that he conducts educational and demonstrational work.

3. Ways of stimulating 4-H forestry on the farm.

One of the principal appeals to youngsters is through a home beautification and improvement project. Tree planting is basic to such a project,

and following this phase of tree planting there can be developed an interest in other phases of wildlife including trees for forest production, as protection for birds, and animals, and as a source of pure water. The nature-study approach involving a tree and bird calendar offers a means of interesting young people where the home-beautification approach is not practicable. The raising of young trees as well as birds to a size suitable for planting or release develops a foundation of interest in wildlife that will be permanent. Organized tours for club members to forestry or wildlife project areas are valuable in stimulating a permanent interest. The State club camp for forestry or conservation activities held primarily for project winners from counties or group of counties is an effective climax for each year's work. 4-H forestry projects involving active manual labor on the part of a club member are highly valuable. Such projects could include setting out and maintaining transplant beds for trees, the production of tree seedlings from seedbeds, and timber-stand improvements on a part of the farm woodland which the boy's father would set aside for the exclusive use of the boy. •

4. Getting the greatest permanent value from E. C. W. stand-improvement demonstrations.

An accurate record of volume of wood removed from demonstration plots and of man hours involved in the work furnishes the most valuable information for future educational use of the demonstration plot. A readily observed contrast between thinned and unthinned areas of woodland will be relied upon to emphasize the value and effectiveness of thinning rather than to rely upon detailed growth figures before and after thinning. Some States, particularly those cooperating with the Soil Conservation Service, in promoting farm-woodland improvement are arranging for one-fourth acre sample plots upon which very detailed measurements will be made and where subsequent meetings will be held to supplement the contrast in appearance between thinned and unthinned portions of the woodland.

5. Extension phases of cooperative land-management project in Dubois County, Ind.

The primary objective of the Dubois County study or forestry project was twofold. First, to promote a sustained yield within a specific area; and second, to promote the orderly marketing of forest products grown within that area. The first requirement of the project was a detailed survey of existing timber stands and current rate of growth. The data obtained from this survey are being interpreted and presented to the people of the community through an educational bulletin. To promote action, however, a county forestry council or committee has been formed, sponsored by the county agricultural agent. Members of this council meet with the extension forester who has given a series of talks on the importance of the information obtained in the survey and how it can be used to increase the income from forest products in the county. Members of this committee work in turn as local leaders in contacting business men and landowners who are the ones that must finally put the recommendations, coming from the survey, into practice.

6. Methods used in extending Wisconsin shelterbelt project.

Although not a prairie State, Wisconsin has an extended area in which soil losses from wind erosion are acute. Within this area a special shelterbelt project has been set up in which the county agricultural committees of the several counties concerned, the county agents, and the Wisconsin Conservation Department cooperate. A survey of all farms in 60 townships where shelterbelts are needed has given information to the conservation department on what kind of trees and how many should be produced during the 10-year life of the project. Following the survey farmers have been given the opportunity to apply for as many trees as they care to plant each year for shelterbelt purposes. Each farmer's order is packed at the State nursery, and the packaged trees are delivered to tree-distribution depots in practically every town within the project area. Educational meetings during the winter are held for the benefit of farmers who have applied for trees and, in addition, planting demonstrations are held when the farmers call for their trees at the tree-distribution depot. As many as six of these meetings are held in a single day which makes it necessary that farmers report for their trees promptly. Results of the planting which the farmers did with their own labor and at their own expense were remarkably good until the extremely hot weather of the summer of 1936. The shelterbelt project continues in spite of this setback and is based on the cooperation given by the State in furnishing the trees and by the farmer in doing all the planting work at his own expense.

Forestry Program Committee:

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